Orders for thorow Posts, and Curriers, riding in Post in our affaires.

THe Lords of the priuie Counsell endeuouring heretofore the like furtherance of the seruice of the State, aswell in horsing such as ride on their Princes affaires, as the speedy dispatch of Packets in all places, where Posts were erected and ordeined, considering, that for the seruice of the one, a dayly fee is allowed, and for the other no certaine wages at all, but the hire of the horses let out, and that often ill payd, whereby they stand not so bound to the one, as to attend the other: And that the Townes and Countreys besides became many Wayes vexed and perplexed, by the ouer great libertie of Riders in Poste, specially by such as pretend publique seruice by speciall Commission, contrary to the Kings meaning or their Lordships orders: who minding nothing more, then the particular good of his Seruants and Subiects: for the benefite of the one, reliefe of the other, and more regard to the good vsage of all Owners of horses, and the beasts themselues, did thinke it expedient, to digest and set downe sundry necessary Orders indifferent for all parties to obserue and follow. which Orders being by vs reuiewed and considered, are now according to the necessitie of the times, thought meete to be eftsones allowed and published. The execution whereof we seriously recommending to the Master and Controller of all our Posts, for the better warranting and directing of Posts, so farre as this seruice may concerne them, We doe hereby straightly charge and command, all and euery Lieutenants of Shires, deputie Lieutenants. Justices of all Assises and Peace, Sherifes, Maiors, Bailifes, Constables, Headborowes, and all other his Officers, Ministers, and louing Subiects, to be ayding and assisting to the same, With their vtmost helpe, authoritie and countenance where need shall require, as they tender the furtherance of the seruice of the State, and our displeasure.

1 First it is ordered, That in all places where Posts are layde for the Packet, they also as persons most fit, shall haue the benefit and prehemmence of letting, furnishing & appointing of horses to all riding in Poste, (that is to say) With horne and Guide by Commission or otherwise, And to that end shall keepe, and entertaine of their owne, or haue in a readinesse vnder their direction, such and so many able and sufficient Post horses, With conuenient furniture, as their owne abilities will beare, or that the contributarie prouision of the Townes and Countreys shall enable them vnto, or afford. And if it fall out that Curriers or Thorow Postes, riding in our affaires by speciall Commission come so thicke, or in such numbers, that their ordinary prouision will not suffice, then the Constables of the places where they dwell, with the assistance of the chiefe Magistrates there, and of the Countries adioyning, (being required in our name) shall take vp, bring in, and supply the Posts with horses where they may be had or hired.

2 And like as in the Orders for the carrying of the Packets, the furtherance of our seruice and the State, is onely aymed at, so in this it is intended, that none be holden to ride on publique affaires, but With speciall Commission, and the same signed either by one of our principall Secretaries of State, or sixe at the least of our priuie Counsell, or the Master and Comptrowler generall of the Posts, for all iourneys outwards, and from the Court onely. And to the Court, the Lords of the priuie Counsell of Scotland, any Lieutenant, Deputie or Gouernours in Ireland, the Presidents of Counsels, or Vicepresidents established in the North, or in the Marches of Wales, the Gouernour of Barwicke, Any Ambassadour, Gouernours of Townes, or Agents beyond the Seas, The Warden of the Cinque Ports, or his Lieutenant of Douer, specially sending to the Court, to the bodie of the Counsell, or Secretaries of State, or any Packet so directed, that it may appeare, the partie dispatched therewith, rideth in our speciall affaires, (the Ambassadors of forreine Princes Within this our Realme, and the ordinary Posts for France and Flanders allowed, and by their badges sufficiently commissionated, excepted) and of all such so riding in publike affaires, it shall be lawfull for the Postes, or the Owners of the horses to demand for the hire of each horse after the rate of two pence halfepeny the mile, (besides the Guides groats.) But of all others riding post With horne and Guide, about their priuate businesses, the hire and prices are left to the parties discretions to agree and compound Within themselues.

3 It ſhal not be lawful for any perſon whatſoeuer riding in poſt by Commiſſion or otherwiſe, to take and ride away the Horſe or Horſes of any man, Poſt or other, not hauing firſt and aforehand fully payed and ſatisfied for the price and hire vnto the Owners or the Poſt for them, nor ride them further then the next immediate Stage without changing, without the knowledge and conſent of the Poſt of the Stage, by whom he rideth in poſt, nor charge any horſe ſo taken to ride in poſte with any Male, or burden, (beſides his Rider) that exceedeth the weight of thirty pounds: Neither ſhall any man ſo riding in poſte, offer to ride any mans Horſe aboue ſeuen miles the houre in Summer viz. From the firſt of Aprill, till the laſt of September, nor aboue fiue in Winter, which ſhall be accounted the reſt of the yeere: And if any ſhall wilfully diſobey herein or in any poynt hereof to the manifeſt hurt or hinderance of the Horſe or his Owner, The Officers and Magiſtrates of the place vpon complaint made, ſhall ſtay the parties offending vntil they haue giuen preſent ſatisfaction, or ſufficient ſecuritie to repay the damage.

4 Finally, as it is onely intended that our ſeruice in this kinde, be at all hands furthered, and the Poſtes to that end, in all their Wants and Wrongs to right themſelues by the helpe and authority of the Magiſtrates, Townes and Countreys as aboueſayd: So if the ſeruice ſhall ſeeme vnto any Poſt a burden ouer great for his priuate ſtate to beare and vndertake, and the Townes and Countreys (notwithſtanding the eaſe and quiet they reape thereby) no way willing to countenance, encourage or enable him thereto: or otherwiſe in regard of yeeres or indiſpoſition, ſhall not ſee reaſon to vnderly the charge, and trouble of the ſeruice, as being a hinderance to his ſpeciall duetie in the ſeruice of the Packet: The Poſt in ſuch caſe attending his peculiar charge, the Conſtables, and Magiſtrates of the places ſhall take order from time to time, that Horſes bee prouided for all riding in poſte by Commiſſion, or ſpecially ſent in our affaires as beforeſaid, in ſuch ſort as they were ſubiect to doe before there were any Poſtes there, and as in places where are yet no ſtanding Poſtes at all. Vnto whom alſo our pleaſure is, that theſe Orders ſhall be in force, and auaileable (being deliuered them from the Maſter and Comptroller of the Poſts) ſo farre as they, and any branch of them may concerne the furtherance of publique ſeruice, or their owne reliefe.

God ſaue the King.

Imprinted at London by Robert Barker,
Printer to the Kings moſt Excellent
Maieſtie. Anno 1603.